

The Selection, Duties, and Salaries of Deputies

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This subject is rather difficult to discuss, for I feel that each county surveyor has problems that no other surveyor would have. The working conditions are never the same in any two counties.

The most important thing to consider in selecting a deputy is his qualifications. I feel that a deputy should be a graduate engineer or one who has had enough experience to handle the job. In Delaware County most of our work is drainage; so the deputy should know quite a bit about drainage. By drainage I mean tile, dredging, and run-off drainage. Of course, you can take a man who knows the fundamentals of engineering and soon teach him the fundamentals of drainage. For the next five to ten years there will be more drainage problems than there have been in the last ten or twenty years. In our county, ditches have been neglected and are in a terrible condition. Most of the tile drains are from 40 to 60 years old and are ready for replacement. However, with the end of the war, the county and townships are planning quite a building program, such as bridges, roads, school buildings; so no doubt the surveyor will be called on to help out with these projects. A good deputy should be in a position to handle such engineering problems.

A good deputy should have a mind of his own and should be able to make decisions. This, of course, is up to the surveyor, as some will place more responsibility on their deputies than others. A deputy should be a fair diplomat and know how to meet the public and how to handle them. A poor deputy can ruin the reputation of a good surveyor. Of course, it is taken for granted that a deputy should be neat in his work and appearance.

In selecting a deputy some of the above-mentioned qualifications may have to be sacrificed. Other things enter into the picture, such as politics and sometimes personal feelings. It is only natural that politics be considered, for after all the surveyor's job is a political job and most men want to be re-elected. The best politics for a surveyor is to do his job well and have a deputy who will do likewise.

It is necessary for some surveyors to go out of the county to select the deputy, if there is no one available in the county. In that case politics can be ignored and you won't receive any criticism from the central committee. The selection of a deputy simmers down to the judgment and desires of the surveyor.

The duties of a deputy are practically the same as the duties of the surveyor. The deputy should have charge of most of the field work, with the surveyor helping, advising, and planning. I would want my deputy to go ahead as if I weren't there and be able to make some decisions of his own. I would want him to do his work in such a manner that, if he was not a licensed engineer, I should not hesitate to place my official seal upon his work.

The salary of a deputy is controlled to a certain extent by law, but there is some leeway in the salary. The law says from \$125 to \$400 a month, and these figures vary according to the population of the county. The biggest problem we have is getting the County Commissioners and County Council to approve the salary and appropriate the money. The salary of a deputy in these times should be high enough that you can demand and get a good deputy.